

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 117537
ORIGIN ARA-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY QUITO
INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CGEN, PFOR, EC

SUBJECT: STOWAWAYS ON ECUADOREAN VESSEL REPUBLICA DEL
ECUADOR

1. HERE ARE THE FACTS AS GIVEN TO THE DEPARTMENT BY THE
IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE (INS) OFFICERS IN
JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA, WHO HANDLED THIS CASE:

A. THE VESSEL HAS A HISTORY OF SMUGGLING STOWAWAYS INTO
THE US FROM AT LEAST 1969.

B. 20 STOWAWAYS HAVE BEEN CAUGHT AT DIFFERENT TIMES FROM
THAT ONE VESSEL.

C. WHEN THE VESSEL WAS INSPECTED THIS WEEK IN JACKSONVILLE,
THE FIRST QUESTION PUT TO THE CAPTAIN WAS, "ARE THERE ANY
STOWAWAYS ON BOARD?" HE REPLIED, "NO." FIVE WERE FOUND.
INS DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE CAPTAIN COULD HAVE BEEN
UNAWARE OF THEIR PRESENCE.

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D. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP) IS FOR THE CREW TO
REMAIN ON BOARD UNTIL THE ENTIRE INS INSPECTION IS COM-
PLETED. DURING THIS INSPECTION, HOWEVER, 15 OF THE CREW
LEFT THE VESSEL BEFORE THE INSPECTION WAS COMPLETED, TAKING

TWO STOWAWAYS WITH THEM, WHO WERE CAUGHT BY INS. INS

BELIEVES THAT THE CREW WAS IN ON THIS OPERATION FROM THE BEGINNING.

E. IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE, INS REFUSED PERMISSION FOR THE CAPTAIN AND HIS CREW TO GO ASHORE, WHICH IS COMPLETELY WITHIN THE DISCRETION OF INS OFFICERS. THE VESSEL WENT ON TO BALTIMORE, PHILADELPHIA, AND NEW YORK CITY. AT EACH PORT, THE CREW WAS REFUSED PERMISSION TO GO ASHORE. THEY WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE SHIP WHILE IN US TERRITORY. FYI: INS SAYS THAT THIS IS SOP, AND THAT WHENEVER INS DOES THIS, IT NEVER HAS TROUBLE WITH STOWAWAYS AGAIN FROM THE PARTICULAR VESSEL CONCERNED.

F. THE INS REFUSAL DOES NOT, HOWEVER, MEAN THAT THE CAPTAIN AND HIS CREW WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE BARRED ON THE NEXT VOYAGE. IF THERE ARE NO STOWAWAYS FOUND, AND IF THE CREW BEHAVES ITSELF, THEN INS WILL ALLOW THE CAPTAIN AND HIS CREW TO GO ASHORE THE NEXT TIME THE VESSEL COMES TO THE US.

2. ALL THE ABOVE EXCEPT THE FYI HAS BEEN PASSED TO THE ECUADOREAN EMBASSY HERE, WHICH SAID IT WOULD INFORM ITS FOREIGN MINISTRY. THUS, NO ACTION IS REQUIRED OF EMBASSY QUITO. IF, HOWEVER, THE SUBJECT COMES UP, YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO USE ANYTHING IN THIS TELEGRAM, AND SHOULD DEFINITELY MENTION THE VESSEL'S HISTORY.

CHRISTOPHER

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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